**Florida Tech Faculty Senate**

March 27, 2018

**Minutes**

**Senators Present:** W. Arrasmith (DES), M. Baarmand (PSS), J. Brenner (CE), K.

Burke (SAC), P. Converse (Psych), H. Crawford (CS), I. Delgado Perez (COB), C. Harvey (SBA), A. Huser (Lib), M. Jensen (MAE), S. Jensen (COB), K. Johnson (OES), B. Lail (ECE), D. Lelekis (SAC), T. Marcinkowski (DEIS), G. Maul (OES), S. Murshid (ECE), N. Nesnas (Chem), A. Nnolim (ESD), L. Perdigao (SAC), C. Polson (Bio), R. Rusovici (MAE), D. Sandall (COB), M. Silaghi (CS), N. Suksawang (CCM), G. Tenali (Math), R. van Woesik (Bio), N. Weatherly (SBA), A. Welters (Math), B. Wheeler (Aero), K. Winkelmann (Chem), D. Yuran (SAC), Z. Zhou (Psych)

**Senators Absent:** O. Doule (HCDIA), U. Jones (Aero), M. Kaya (BME), S. Kozaitis (Lib), D. LeVan (CS), B. Morkos (MAE), A. Nag (PSS), B. Paulillo (Psych), A. Walton (COB)

**Proxies:** David Lowe (Lib) for S. Kozaitis (Lib); Rian Mehta (COA) for U. Jones (COA)

**Other Attendees:** Monica Baloga (Provost), Marco Carvalho (COEC), Amitabh Dutta (COB), Kastro Hamed (DEIS), Vipuil Kishore (CE), Dwayne McCay (Pres), Rian Mehta (COA), Ken Revay (BOT), Ted Richardson (COB), Munevver Subasi (Math), Chao Wang (Lib)

**[[\*\*NOTE: The original file of the minutes draft was corrupted. Thanks to notes compiled from others at the meeting, the minutes were reconstructed in detail. The names of those speaking, beyond the administration and senate leadership, as well as those making motions, were not always clear, so those names are removed for consistency. \*\*]]**

**Call to Order**

President Baarmand called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 13 (no. 134) meeting. The motion was made and the minutes were approved by unanimous vote of voice.

**Summary**

President Baarmand announced that Pres. McCay and Provost Baloga would be stopping by the meeting at 4 p.m. to answer questions about the administration’s 3-year transition plan. He then reported on the outcome of the conference with the administration to compare the Faculty Senate and Administration plans for tenure. Senators Baarmand, Lail, Sandall, and Winkelmann attended the conference.

Pres. Baarmand stressed that the issue of “shared governance” was brought up several times, as meaningful faculty involvement is the bedrock of higher education that any institution should have. The senators at the conference made it clear this was a must. The administration met this insistence with some reservation, concerned that the Board of Trustees may perceive it as the faculty running the university. But, as both parties agreed that faculty should be partners in academic affairs at the university like promotion and tenure, a compromise was reached to change the wording from “shared governance” to “faculty participation.”

The conference then addressed the establishment of an Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee and a pre- and post-tenure committee to join the current University Promotion Committee that would absorb the review of tenure applications. All agree that the tenure system will not be perfect at first, so the AFTC will provide oversight to ensure things are done fairly and that the integrity of tenure and the system is maintained. The committee could also handle appeals. The deans—most were also present at the conference—also agreed on the need for the AFTC. There was, however, agreement that 4 tenure committees were too many and that the pre- and post-tenure review committees could be absorbed into the functions of other committees.

Pres. Baarmand then moved to the next topic discussed, the definition of tenure, which goes back to understanding what is actually meant by tenure in terms of the faculty member’s appointment and issues of termination. Termination for cause would remain, but also for chronically low performance and financial exigency.

Moving on to the topic of post-tenure review, Pres. Baarmand reported that Pres. McCay says that there may not need to be a systematic post-tenure review for faculty with positive annual evaluations. For those with issues, there will be a performance improvement plan and the outcome could lead to termination. Pres. Baarmand reiterated that the faculty senators expressed the desire that post-tenure review be developmental, but the administration insists it be punitive, at least in this regard.

At this point, some senators raised some questions and concerns:

*-On the one hand, this narrows post-tenure review to just faculty who do not pass optics, before it included everyone. What is the administration’s stance on those who do not pass, could they default to stay 5 years?*

*-How does this post-tenure review outcome compare with other institutions?*

*-What is meant by low? How do we understand “chronic”?*

Pres. Baarmand replied that these details would be addressed later but indicated that most institutions stop at “just cause” for termination after tenure. Sen. Sandall added that it did not meet the AAUP definition for tenure, but some institutions will trigger a post-tenure review plan in the 6th year if 3 out of 5 annual evaluations were low.

Pres. Baarmand then moved to the cap that was initially included in the administration’s model, that faculty with tenure or in tenure track positions would not exceed 50% of full time faculty. This item was met with resistance from the senators at the conference and without too much negotiation, the administration agreed to removing the cap from the 3-year transition plan. However, while agreed that all faculty have the option to pursue tenure, the administration now specifies that if unsuccessful the faculty member, in consultation with the dean, will have to decide what type of contract to be signed. This will be discussed more when Pres. McCay and Provost Baloga arrive.

Next, Pres. Baarmand shared that some of the deans indicated the college-level criteria were close to completion. The conference committee members discussed whether they would be ready in time for a vote this spring. Pres. McCay would like an endorsement from the faculty to present at the BOT Academic Affairs Committee meeting on April 18 and BOT General Meeting on April 20. He did not feel there was sufficient time to review the criteria with this timeline. At this point, the goal is for both sides (faculty and administration) to agree on a basic framework to present to the BOT, with the criteria and remaining details to be finalized over the summer with meaningful faculty participation.

Some additional comments and questions were raised from the floor:

*-Does the administration agree with the plan to have a senate vote of endorsement and with faculty participation in the criteria over the summer?*

*-Isn’t the administration’s plan different from the Faculty Senate’s Plan?*

Pres. Baarmand replied that the administration is ok with moving forward with an endorsement of the basic plan and working on the details over the summer. He added that the administration’s plan focuses on the 3-year transition plan: 1st year for existing full professors, 2nd year for existing associate professors, and 3rd year for existing assistance professors. He is trying to get clearance to distribute it, so perhaps Pres. McCay and Provost Baloga can address when they visit the meeting. He noted that the 50% cap was in there but would be taken out.

Last, Pres. Baarmand shared a final point regarding how the faculty would feel about a tenure system that is not clearly defined and that doesn’t describe how it will impact faculty duties. At this point, the easy way out is to not vote for it. The senators at the conference stated it was necessary for details to be clear so faculty can see what they are voting for. Vagueness will play into uncertainty and turn people off. Pres. McCay and Provost Baloga want a strong vote of endorsement from the senate to move forward with the BOT in their April meeting, so there will not be a vote at the General Assembly in August on this endorsement, as originally thought. If the senate and administration can agree on a basic model, then the senate will write a resolution and vote to endorse it. That will be the mechanism the administration will take to the BOT. To that end, we have a meeting next week to discuss a resolution and will add an additional extra meeting on April 17 for a vote, the day before the BOT Academic Affairs meeting.

Pres. McCay and Provost Baloga entered the meeting.

Provost Baloga clarified that there will not be a detailed plan to present to the BOT until their October meeting. The endorsement sought for the April meeting is on the overarching plan.

Pres. Baarmand responded that October will provide more time for the details, so the basic endorsement will be for April 18. He then passed out some copies of a document titled “Safeguards for Current Faculty” and also projected the information on a projector slide. **[Refer to the handout].**

Pres. Baarmand explained that the safeguards are meant to protect the interests of the current faculty. While a majority of the faculty support moving to a tenure system, they do not want to see it implemented at the expense of their colleagues. This is in the overall interest of the university; if a lot of existing faculty do not make tenure and become instructors and drop their research programs, this will negatively impact the institution. This is not what those faculty members came to FIT to do. As Faculty Senate President, he hears this daily. He then read the following safeguards from the handout:

The following safeguards are meant to protect the interests of the current faculty during the implementation of a tenure system at Florida Institute of Technology. The majority of the current

faculty are in favor of a tenure system; however, they expect that it will not negatively impact those that do not choose to pursue tenure and those that do not receive it. Tenure for some cannot be granted at the expense of others.

These safeguards also serve the best interest of the university. If a large number of faculty without tenure are forced to become teaching faculty or instructors, the university operation would be hampered by potential departures and lower research output.

1. Current faculty that are denied tenure should be able to remain on their current contracts with their current distribution of research, teaching, and service loads.
2. Current faculty that choose not to go up for tenure should be able to continue their current contracts with their current distributions of research, teaching, and service loads.
3. Current faculty that are denied tenure should be given a second opportunity to pursue tenure if they wish to do so.
4. Current full professors who provide satisfactory evidence of activities in research, teaching, and service should be tenured in Fall 2018.
5. The number of tenured faculty in each college/unit should depend on the college/unit mission and the faculty member's credentials and accomplishments; it should not be based on a predetermined quota.

In response to the first point, Pres. McCay stressed that tenure was necessary to take FIT to the next level to attract new faculty and keep them. There are predictions that many private colleges and universities will close in the next half century, so FIT needs to be among the elite ones that will remain strong. He then went through the main points of the administration’s plan: there will be no quota—everyone at assistant, associate, and full rank should be able to apply for tenure; the standards for each college should be the same for tenure and contract—COA is basically done, COS/COE are close, COB close, COPLA hopefully soon; no grandfathering will be done; we are confirming the BOT’s role in this, as accreditation states the BOT’s endorsement is needed; each faculty can chose their path—those who stay on contract will have same lengths.

Pres. McCay then discussed what would change for faculty who chose to remain on the contract system: research faculty would be expected to have 70-75% of compensation coming from soft money over 5-year period; teaching faculty will have an increase in teaching loads, otherwise we cannot give course release to the tenure track faculty. Bridge money can be used for research faculty, but that is all.

Following this description, there were a number of questions from the floor:

*-Is there a possibility of no contract if you do not get tenure?*

Pres. McCay replied that it was TBD. If you choose to go for tenure and do not make it, then the decision to have a new contract will depend on university need. If you go for and do not make tenure in physics and there are not many physics students, then there is little need for you at the university. There is NO guarantee if you go for tenure and do not get it that you will get a contract from the university.

Pres. Baarmand pointed out that this description was part of the administration plan, but without all the details regarding soft money, to which Pres. McCay added that it was his plan, what he believed he could use to convince the BOT.

Additional comments and questions followed:

*-While it is great that all faculty have the opportunity to pursue tenure, but in the absence of details regarding criteria and committees we are shooting in the dark to endorse this.*

*-There should be an early assessment of a faculty member’s chances in comparison to the criteria.*

Pres. McCay agreed with these concerns, assuring everyone that he was just seeking an endorsement to pursue the concept and that the senate’s approval of the plan will come later when faculty can measure themselves against the standards that will be enforced.

In consideration of the deans’ efforts to write the criteria, Pres. Baarmand emphasized that the senate wants faculty involvement in all parts of development.

Pres. McCay pointed out that editing is easy but creating is difficult. The work conducted by the deans is to create a straw man of criteria that can be edited, discussed, and further developed in conjunction with the department heads.

*While great to remove 50% cap, the consequence for many is essentially a teaching track*.

Pres. McCay responded that the current system had not worked well. Each person should be involved in all three of teaching, research, and service. Currently many are not doing all three, so if we stay with current system and start enforcing it will not go well for those faculty members.

Provost Baloga added that the criteria will be established by colleges in response to the university and college missions. The criteria cannot be the same that they have been. The bar needs to be raised to reach the top 100.

Pres. McCay agreed and stated that it would be difficult to jump another 20 spots in the rankings without doing something dramatic. Being a non-tenure institution does not appeal well to new graduates around the country.

*-How does this tenure system work for faculty in the Extended Studies Division?*

Provost Baloga replied that faculty with administrative contracts and faculty outside of the 9-month, teaching-research-service mold had not been addressed.

*-What percentage of faculty do you believe will transition to the teaching track?*

Pres. McCay responded that faculty would be ill-advised to go up for tenure if they have not pursued scholarship. He guessed that approximately 20% of the faculty would go into a teaching track and that some may leave; if none did, the whole plan goes up in smoke. He hoped deans would advise faculty well before they try and go for tenure. We have about 80 faculty members doing funded research right now, but colleges will need to determine what scholarship would count for their units.

*-Would it be enough for 1/3 of the faculty to go into a teaching track to handle the extra course load?*

Pres. McCay and Provost Baloga believed it would be enough, approximately 100 courses.

*-What about faculty with administration roles? Some are not teaching.*

Provost Baloga clarified that tenure was for the faculty title, not the administrative title. The initial assessments would be the complete body of work, not what was done in the previous year.

Pres. Baarmand returned to the first safeguard, asking the administrators to clarify that a new contract would not be guaranteed for failing to make tenure, and Provost Baloga confirmed that to be because choice was now given to all. Pres. McCay reiterated that if there was need, the faculty member could be considered for going back to a contract.

*Should there be a pre-tenure screening? While we have promotion advising, now the job is on the line.*

Pres. McCay confirmed that is what he meant by the advice from the deans about the decision to go up for tenure.

Pres. Baarmand returned to the safeguard regarding current distribution of teaching, research, and service for those who chose to remain on the contract system. Pres. McCay believed that faculty who were making strong contributions in all three should be going up for tenure, those who are not should not be doing all of them anyway and are better suited for a different track. Provost Baloga recommended removing the word “current distribution.”

Pres. McCay then revisited his main points. He asked for an endorsement of the general plan, in principle, not the details. There will be a chance for the faculty senate to endorse the final plan. Pres. McCay expressed his understanding of people not wanting to take any risks, but there would have to be some risk involved. FIT needs something to attract good new faculty without alienating the current faculty.

Provost Baloga added that everyone needed to be realistic about where the target institutions are in terms of their productivity. Pres. McCay agreed and pointed out that currently FIT is last among this group. While FIT produces great alumni, it is last among these institutions in research productivity.

*-What is the long-term sustainability for units that are responsible for covering courses in the General Education Core? Will new faculty lines be available if many current faculty in a unit are on the tenure-track? Some institutions offer non-tenure track positions, but with higher salaries so they can adapt to those needs. Why not retain the current contract positions with responsibilities in teaching, research, and service both for current faculty and new faculty? There is concern about future hiring to be able to meet the units’ needs and attract new faculty. Even for faculty who mostly teach, being able to do scholarship makes them more effective in the classroom.*

Pres. McCay reiterated that each college would create the criteria and decide what is scholarship and Provost Baloga questioned if it was realistic to assume all faculty would be tenure track. Dean Richardson added that in his previous institution faculty on tenure track still had 3-3 loads, with adjuncts hired to cover remaining courses. He said it was doubtful he would reduce teaching loads for tenure-track faculty that much.

*With criteria being created in each college, will the primary decision come from the college level?*

Pres. McCay responded that in his model the decision would come from the college and sent up the line with endorsement from dean.

Pres. Baarmand returned to the third safeguard, if faculty denied tenure would get a second chance to reapply. Provost Baloga indicated that provision would defeat the purpose of getting the counsel (advice) in the first place, and Pres. McCay believed there could always be special circumstances such as landing a major grant or considering an extension for someone with a serious illness, but those should not be defined into the overarching plan.

*What if someone is advised to go up because they currently are making progress in all three, but once criteria are finalized finds they are just shy of the benchmark. Can they petition to take a few extra years?* Pres. McCay said the answer is probably yes, but not for a longer extension.

Pres. McCay repeated that those are details we cannot answer by the end of this meeting. We are looking for an endorsement of the overall plan. Pres. Baarmand replied that the flexibility by which they’ve answered the questions, however, were not how the administration’s plan was received upon reading it. Provost Baloga believed this would be true for all the main points, only in extenuating circumstances, and Pres. McCay indicated it was not a final document but the basic concept sound: full professors go up in the first year because tenure is based on body of work.

*We have several faculty who may go up at the beginning of this process. Who will decide?*

Provost Baloga recounted the plan to start with President of University, and then go to the senior VPs, and then to the deans. Normally there will be a college committee, but at first it will be the deans as a basis for a committee to approve the full professors.

Pres. Baarmand asked that if the point of grandfathering full professors is moot, could those promoted in past five years just submit the previous portfolio with an updated CV. Pres. McCay said the body of work should be submitted, but he is not in a position to say how many pages until the colleges submit the criteria.

*-How much faculty input will be there for formulating the details?*

Pres. McCay responded that deans are in control of collecting information and at least two have consulted with faculty already.

Dean Carvalho outlined the process for the College of Engineering and Science. He identified the universities ranked in the range FIT is targeting and collected the criteria for faculty at those institutions. The data collection will take some time, but once established there will be a clear idea of what FIT faculty should produce to be competitive. The criteria will be objective, as they come from the data at the target institutions. He will meet with the department heads on Friday to check the numbers and then the criteria will be brought to the faculty. The targets are factual, so there are few alternatives than this baseline of production. Some faculty are already at this baseline, but we do not have much time to break out of our current ranking. Six years is not going to cut it. If we work on just the numbers needed today, it will not be enough to catch up. We want to be in a position where we are strong. This is true to be competitive whether we have tenure or not.

*-Does this mean the baseline numbers will rise each year?*

Dean Carvalho replied in the affirmative. The guidelines cannot be static; we always need to measure up to our peers. That is why we are taking care with the criteria. There is no interest in constructing them if they are unattainable, but we must have criteria aimed at a target.

*-This is a good model for future tenure track hires, but for current faculty they were not hired with the support of peers at these target institutions. We should be realistic with the current faculty.*

*-If the tenure criteria (currently being prepared by the college) is so rigorous that only a handful of faculty members can meet it, then that would not only be unfair, but would also devalue the role that those faculty members played as FIT rose through the ranks over the past decades. This would also reflect poorly on FIT to outsiders, that the university hires incompetent faculty.*

Dean Carvalho responded that the numbers are what they are and encouraged everyone to work together to put support in place for the criteria, like looking at teaching faculty as they are at other institutions. He stressed that the criteria must be recognized in trying to find the best possible conditions to achieving them.

-*Is there a plan to change the titles for faculty who chose to stay on the contract system*?

Provost Baloga replied that it was best for the title to match the contract type, so they are looking into lecturer for teaching track and research professor for research track. There may be other types of criteria for other lines like clinical faculty. McCay added that traditional titles were reserved for tenure and he had never dreamed titles would be the problem.

*-That is why I cannot support the tenure system as proposed. The opportunity for not having all teaching, but not having the research at other institutions was the motivation to come to FIT and like that there is no tenure system for this reason. The proposed system locks me out and other faculty in the same situation. This is what made FIT unique and we may not have received an Olin grant without this difference. Faculty who agree with me could live with a move to a tenure system if flexibility to remain in current contract was preserved, but if moved to teaching track that will decrease productivity for those current faculty and may choose to leave.*

Provost Baloga responded that would be a choice faculty would have to make, but FIT is not going to move ahead staying on the current path. Pres. McCay agreed that there are many excellent faculty who would not measure up to how other institutions rate the productivity. Unfortunately, by that standard, we are far behind. He wasn’t sure what the secret was to all the great alumni FIT produces and that if tenure will destroy that it shouldn’t be done.

*-Some faculty choose to come to FIT because the teaching is slightly higher than other institutions, especially big state schools where faculty do not give attention to undergraduate students. Could it be that the secret is that faculty at FIT care about what goes on the classroom more than at most tenured institutions? If we push on that too much, will we lose that edge and not get faculty who provided that type of environment for our students?*

Pres. McCay acknowledged that it was gamble, but did not think it was a mistake, and Provost Baloga pointed out that lecturers would not be bound to just teaching.

*-But it would be a demotion, and not just in title here, it would also hinder those faculty’s ability to get positions elsewhere. If we do not handle this transition in a way that allows faculty who do more teaching than research to have a way to succeed, then it could be a mistake*.

Dean Carvalho returned to resources, citing that it was more than just a startup package but also the infrastructure to support research activity. We can be concerned that there won’t be productivity without that infrastructure and that we do not have the endowments like other institutions, but we need to focus on how to get to that level. It will take compromise, support, creativity.

*-Will we also raise the bar for graduate students? There are a small percentage now compared to peer institutions, so we need support mechanisms to bring those graduate students here to support the research endeavor.*

Dean Carvalho agreed that this was part of the efforts to provide more resources.

*-If faculty who stay on contract system are moved into a teaching track and have their titles changed to lecturer, would that impact their salaries?*

Provost Baloga replied no, and Pres. McCay stated that changing titles was not set in stone.

*-Will there be any incentives for earning tenure in terms of salary?*

Pres. McCay replied that longevity of employment was an incentive, and that the 6%/9% raise for promotions to associate/full professor would remain. Maybe there would be an additional 3% for tenure, but it has not yet been discussed.

Seeing the time, Pres. Baarmand stated that the final point—that the distribution of tenured faculty in each college would be determined by that college’s mission—was moot since the cap had been removed. He recommended that the Executive and Tenure committees draft a resolution to endorse the general plan for moving to tenure in time for the April 3 meeting. Following discussion and any revisions at the April 3 meeting, senators will have two weeks to report to their units for feedback in preparation for a vote on April 17.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin R. Burke, Faculty Senate Secretary